

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9282

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

FBIS OKINAWA

/CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT EAGR CH

SUBJECT: PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL--NO CHANGE IN AGRICULTURAL
POLICY

BEGIN SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH THE FIRST PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL
TO COMMENT ON THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN PICKS UP SOME OF THE
STINGING LANGUAGE OF STRUGGLE AND AFFIRMS MAO'S DIRECT
PARTICIPATION IN CRITICISM, THE EDITORIAL THEME--THE PROMO-
TION OF SPRING FARMING--AND THE MANNER IN WHICH IT IS
HANDLED REFLECTS CLEAR INTENT TO CONTINUE EXISTING AGRI-
CULTURAL POLICIES AND TO KEEP THE STRUGGLE FROM INTERFERING
WITH PRODUCTION. END SUMMARY

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1. THE FIRST PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL (FEBRUARY 24) SINCE

NEW YEAR'S DAY TAKES UP THE TRADITIONAL ANNUAL SPRING PLANTING CALL AND REAFFIRMS PRIORITIES FOR THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, WITH AGRICULTURE AS THE FOUNDATION FOLLOWED BY LIGHT INDUSTRY AND HEAVY INDUSTRY. THE EDITORIAL ALSO ASSERTS THAT "WE MUST CONTINUE THE PROLETARIAN POLICIES OF THE PARTY FOR THE RURAL AREAS...AND LOOK AFTER THE WELL-BEING OF MASSES." THIS SUGGESTS THAT THE POLICY OF PRIVATE PLOTS FOR THE PEASANTS AND THEIR RIGHT TO CONTINUE WITH APPROVED SIDELINE HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION ARE TO REMAIN BASICALLY UNCHANGED. THUS, AS IN THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND SUBSEQUENT POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGNS THE REGIME IS SEEKING EXPLICITLY TO EXCLUDE THE RURAL AREAS FROM POTENTIAL DISRUPTION.

2. WHILE UNREPENTANT CAPITALIST ROADERS WITHIN THE PARTY ARE ATTACKED FOR PUTTING TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON PRODUCTION, THE EDITORIAL CALLS FOR GOING "ALL OUT TO DEVELOP AGRICULTURE AND DOING IT FASTER," AND CONCLUDES WITH A GENERAL PLEA--CITING ANOTHER MAO QUOTATION--FOR INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. THUS THE REGIME TRIES TO SQUARE THE CIRCLE BY ASSERTING THE HOARY MAO POSTULATE THAT INCREASED CONCERN WITH CLASS STRUGGLE WILL INEXORABLY LEAD TO INCREASED PRODUCTION.

3. ALTHOUGH THE TONE TOWARD AGRICULTURAL POLICY IS MODERATE, THE REFERENCES TO THE CURRENT POLITICAL STRUGGLE ARE MORE INTENSE. THE NEW MAO QUOTATION, WHICH LOOSELY TRANSLATED STATES: "WHAT IS THIS NONSENSE OF TAKING THE THREE INSTRUCTIONS AS THE KEY LINK*", TIES THE MAJOR ATTACK OF THE IMPORTANT FEBRUARY 17 PEOPLE'S DAILY ARTICLE DIRECTLY TO MAO. THE TONE OF MAO'S VOICE IMPLIES REAL ANGER THAT LAST YEAR'S DICTATORSHIP STUDY CAMPAIGN CALL TO EMPHASIZE CLASS STRUGGLE WAS DILUTED BY GIVING UNITY AND STABILITY AND PROMOTION OF PRODUCTION EQUAL BILLING. THIS OFFERS FURTHER AMMUNITION FOR POLEMICISTS TO SHARPEN ATTACKS AND ITS PUBLICATION NOW MUST OBVIOUSLY REFLECT THE OPENLY ACKNOWLEDGED SPLIT WITHIN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. NEVERTHELESS, THE REGIME'S INSULATION OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND PRODUCTION EFFORTS FROM THE CAMPAIGN, JUST AS HUA KUO-FENG'S PERSONAL ASSERTION THAT FOREIGN POLICY WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED, SEEMS TO IMPLY THE CAMPAIGN WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE WITHIN A CAREFULLY DEFINED FRAMEWORK.

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